



EDUCATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBALIZATION AND ICT IN NIGERIA: NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Globalization and its accompanying Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have affected educational practices in Nigeria positively and negatively. Education is an instrument of national development, which is why any threats to or challenges of education ought to be issues of national disturbance. The educational implications of globalization for the developing nations like Nigeria are enormous. For instance, the process of integrating technology into classroom instructions presupposes a technologically-based teacher training programmes. The production of knowledge-based individuals, suitably equipped for the globalized era demands restructuring of the school curriculum to the tune of global trends. This paper exposes these challenges of education occasioned by globalization and ICT in Nigeria. The paper begins by analysis of major antecedents and proceeds to clarification of key concepts. It goes further to delineate the role of education in national development and the negative effects of globalization on Nigeria education. It concludes by identifying strategies to be adopted to position education in the context of globalization. The paper operates on the conviction that education in Nigeria would be better placed to perform its task of national development if these global challenges are met. For now, it seems that globalization and ICT have frustrated educational programmes in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Globalization, ICT, development, education, teaching, learning.

INTRODUCTION:

Development is a progressive unfolding of intrinsic potentialities of a given reality. In connection with a nation, it relates to the fundamental transformation of the nation's mode of production so as to bring about qualitative changes in the nation's living conditions. This process of transformation brings on the people's collective will and determination to improve their common situation through imaginative and practical application of these skills. Development is a many-sided process; social, economic, political, etc. From the social perspective, Acha (2004) sees development as an increase in social complexity to achieve the consciously chosen goals which are desired to promote good interpersonal relationship, tolerance, mutual and social benefit, love and justice for all. In other words, true development transcends provision of social amenities to the improvement of human resources which of course is the improvement of man in the unfolding realities of his creative potential.

Education is indispensable in the realization of the intrinsic potentialities of both human and societal realities. It is upon the maximization of these potentials that national development would both be conceptualized and demonstrated. This has become the case because of the role of education in national development. Education is an instrument of self-discovery, self-realization and self-assertion whereupon an individual outwardly manifests his hidden traits and characteristics in a bid to conquer his environment. Education as a process then enhances the personality of man and serves as the moving force behind the socio-economic advancement of the society. Aware of these progressive and developmental characteristics of education, the Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN, (2004) declares that education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because it is the most important instrument of change, and any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by educational revolution. Education is the hob of national development. Since this is the case, issues affecting education inevitably become issues of national importance, because such issues would pose threats to national development.

Education exercises great influence on the social, economic and political sectors of the nation. For instance, the inculcation of social norms, values, habits and attitude which constitutes the social role of education would as a matter of necessity enhance social relations among individuals. Again, the transmission of entrepreneur skills and technological skills, which is the major task of vocational and technological education would place individual in vantage points towards successful self-employments. Adequate personality development by way of proper integration of sound moral principles and undiluted sense of judgment attributable to qualitative education would position an individual towards a meaningful contribution to the political life of the nation when availed the opportunity to govern. The inter-connectedness between education and the socio-political and economic sectors of the nations presupposes the reality that changes in the socio-political and economic sectors would by implication occasion a change in educational status quo. It is within this theoretical framework that education, globalization and national development would be examined.

The 21st century is characterized by globalization and the rapid spread of electronic communications. According to Giddens (1990), globalization is the intensification of the world wide social relations, which link distant localities in a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-

versa. With globalization, the constraints of location and geography pave way for accelerated trans-cultural and multi-cultural relations, resulting in rapid competitions in the world markets. The wind of globalization and the rapid spread of electronic communications have affected the quality and efficiency of education in Nigeria in dramatic ways. Positively, it has among other things enhanced teaching and learning by making reading materials accessible and available thereby increasing intellectual relations among scholars worldwide. Negatively, it has posed serious problems to education especially among the developing countries that are financially unable to provide facilities and manpower needed for knowledge-based education.

Globalization has occasioned challenges in the area of educational management, administration and policy. Globalization and its attendant Information and Communication Technologies have also threatened educational curriculum hitherto and occasioned the need to adopt a knowledge-based pedagogy to pave way for integration of ICT in teaching and learning. There are also challenges in the areas of teacher education specifically in the training of teachers capable of coping with the global trends especially in the implementation of knowledge-based curriculum. A new educational model will have to be forged to develop professionals for success in an environment of strong market force, changing people, issues and shifting leadership competencies if education is to remain the pivot of national development in recent times.

Conceptual Clarifications:

Education:

In its etymology, the term "education" sources from the Latin root "ex-ducere", which means "to lead out of". To "educate" then is "to lead out of". The etymological definition does not say much rather it instigates an understanding that presupposes a movement or transition from life of barbarism to that of enlightenment and progress. Ezeani (2005) in line with this defines education as a process of discovering and living truth, expanding one's vision of life and the world and of acquiring practical knowledge aimed at transforming the environment. The movement from barbarism to enlightenment is not just a literal transmutation but a signification of radical transformation in approach to life. A critical approach to life would enhance a better understanding of issues and circumstances of life. The problem-solving skills inculcated by education instill in the individual the capacity to resolve the forces of nature and subsequently, cope with changing environment.

Expansion of visions of life is achieved when the individual imbibes relevant attributes that would enable him behave properly and relate adequately with other persons in the society. In line with this Fafunwa (1987) contends that education is a process of cultural transmission for the purpose of continuity and growth and for disseminating knowledge to ensure social control and guarantee rational direction of society. Culture is a people's way of life, the symbol of their existence and the nucleus of their being. When education transmits culture, it transmits the essence of a people, elements that identify a group and a people's traits and characteristics. The ways of life of particular groups are taught to younger generations for purpose of continuity.

Transmission of culture enables an individual adapt suitably to immediate environment. To this end Otite and Ogonwo (2004) conceive education as the acqui-

sition of knowledge and skills required to adapt to and exploit the social and physical environment in the process of development. The skills, which education inculcates could be moral, spiritual or intellectual. No wonder, Ezeani (2005) projects education as an activity of molding the character and developing the minds of individuals by transmitting moral precepts and forms of knowledge considered to be worth while by procedures that are morally defensible. In the formulation of Obanya (2004), education in its broadest sense includes (but transcends) mere schooling and should be seen as an articulation of informal opportunities for self-improvement, non-formal structures for the inculcation and sustenance of basic and post-basic life skills, and formal systems for the awakening and continuous development of the human potential.

Globalization:

The term "globalization" became very popular in the early 1990s as a result of the changes occasioned by technology and vast widespread of electronic communications. Globalization is defined as a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment aided by information technology. This process exercises huge effects on the environment, culture, political systems, economic development, prosperity and on human physical well-being. Waters (1995) defines globalization as a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding. In other words, it is a highly dynamic process of growing interdependence among nation states, with the implication that issues are becoming global rather than national and that they demand global rather than national attention. It is an elimination of barriers to trade, communication and cultural exchange with the intention that world wide openness would promote the inherent wealth of all nations.

In his specification, Odozor (1997), writes that globalization involves three major factors: the widening of the ambience of exchange by integration of the third world, the globalization of forms, which can now organize their activities, research, produce and sell on a world wide scale and thirdly opening of exchange made possible by de-regulation and liberalization. This means that globalization has increasingly taken the appearance of the transformation of the international system from a multipolar or bipolar system to an imperial system under American hegemony consequent upon the propagation of a universal paradigm for both economic and political development in the form of the so-called Washington consensus whose main features are market forces and liberal democracy without regard to the historical and cultural specificities of individual countries. In this vein, Kellner (2003) articulates that globalization combines economic, technological, social and cultural factors in a unique matrix that includes homogeneity and heterogeneity, massification and hybridity, capitalism and democracy and a contradictory matrix of complex factors and effects.

Friedman (1999) sees globalization as the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states and technologies to a degree never witnessed before in a way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-states to reach around the world further, faster, deeper, and cheaper than ever before and the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world. For Robertson (1992) it is the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole, a concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole in the twentieth century. Albrow (1996) defines globalization as a process and a historical transformation constituted by the sum of particular forms and instances of making or being made global by the active dissemination of practices values, technology and other human products throughout the globe. Albrow (1996) maintains that globalization occurs when the globe serves as a focus for or a premise in shaping human activities and when global practices exercise an increasing influence over people's lives. In all, it is a process of particularization of different trends, cultures and practices.

National Development:

National development is the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of the people by provision of basic essentials of life. It is the ability of a nation to ensure meaningful existence of citizens through acts of good governance. Ezeani (2005), defines national development as the nation's human resources acting on its natural resources to produce goods necessary to satisfy the economic needs of the community. A nation is developed when it effectively manages its natural resources and sustains humanistic values among its citizens. According to Okeke (2010) development process must be visualized in its broadest context if it is to meet the expectations of the citizenries for a more elevated standard of living. Accordingly the most all-encompassing goal of development is the progressive realization of the abilities and talents of each individual for his/her own satisfaction and enhancement of the good of the community and the nation. This is what is conceived as human development or people – centred development.

There is a relationship between national development and development as it relates to the individual. According to Rodney (2009), at the level of the individual, development implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. The achievement of any of these aspects of personal development is very much tied to the state of societal development and conversely. The contention here is that national development is a conglomeration of respective individual development. Ikuli (2006)

writes that national development entails improvement in living conditions of individuals that make up a nation in terms of increase in workers' income, access to housing, education, health care, nutrition and greater life expectancy.

Etuk (1998) defines national development as the per capital income of the population; the economic growth rate; the level of life expectancy, the level of school enrolment, the level of industrial production measured against primary production; the range of commodities produced by a people both for internal consumption and for export, and so on. This means that national development is characterized by economic productivity, high standards of living, technological advancement, stable order, availability of basic human needs such as food, clothing and shelter, high levels of literacy and education. Developed nations to this end, suppress poverty, hunger, unemployment, economic crises, etc.

Education and the Task of National Development:

Developed nations of the world strive for a formidable educational system. This is because no nation can rise above the quality of its educational status. Ezeani (2005) opines that education is an investment in the formation of human capital. This means that education facilitates or prepares human resources that are going to act on natural resources to produce goods which satisfy human needs. The more these grow, the more a country is said to record economic or national development as there is going to be an increase in the country's Gross National Product (GNP) and consequently a grow in its export index. Education performs this task through production of manpower through capacity building. Vocational and Technical Education Produce skilled individuals that enter freely into the world of labour and contribute to economic growth through their respective vocations and skills. The possession of an educational degree provides many opportunities for an individual. A person with a college education has the chance to enter a professional work force with sufficient amount of knowledge to be successful at their job. Education through it cognitive development equips an individual with rationality for effective work management.

Education inculcates relevant mental, moral and psychological skills into an individual. These skills are needed by an individual to make meaningful contribution to the world of work. Mental ability is demonstrated in the problem-solving skills needed by an individual to be able to resolve forces inherent in the field of work. Mental skills also enable an individual to effectively manipulate options and alternatives needed for maximization of work outcomes. Effectiveness and competence in the field of work require reasonable knowledge and cognition. Moral and psychological skills are relevant in the formulation of work attitudes and social interaction with fellow workers.

Technical and Vocational Education are very relevant in the development of a nation's economy. Vocational education is the sum total of experiences and competencies needed to make a living. Vocational Education therefore offers individuals the opportunities to learn job skills such as carpentry, welding catering, hotel management, typing metal work and farming. When individuals imbibe these skills they contribute to national development since they would be self-employed. Such skills are also very relevant in the conservation and development of the nation's natural resources which might be dormant as a result of lack of vocational and technical manpower.

In summary, education is milestone of every type of development thorough its provision of knowledge, reason and rationality to work systematically. This enhances production and revamps the nation's economy. A well-educated population develops its economy and society, live together and advance social community. This situation provides adequate and peaceful work environment needed for optimum production and economic progress. Education through its personality and character formation enables individuals to exhibit sound moral and work etiquettes for effective work dispositions. The notions of self-reliance and self-dependence derivable from vocational and technical education equip individuals for self-employment needed for increased work participation and improved cash-flow. Since education is an instrument of national development it follows that threats and challenges of education if not addressed would as a matter of implication retard national progress and development. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as an agent of globalization has posed serious challenges to education in Nigeria.

Negative effects of Globalization and ICT on Education in Nigeria: National Development Implications.

Globalization and its accompanying ICT have numerous negative implications for contemporary Nigeria education. The adoption of the economic standard of the First World Countries as a parameter for evaluating the economies of the countries of the world is a huge economic challenge for developing countries. Since the socio-economic and political growth of a nation is directly linked to progresses in education sector, it follows that the economic integration inherent in globalization would have negative impact for education in the third World countries. The developed countries America for instance parades a stable economy capable of sustaining a more viable education programmes Developing countries Nigeria for instance still grapple with poor funding of educational programmes.

Newer technology-based instructional strategies incorporating the Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW) are used more to expand communication and increase access to resources. The newer technologies represent a significant

change in the teacher's role in the instructional process. Whereas earlier technologies provided teachers primarily with a tool for continuing to teach in the manner they were already teaching, though personally more efficiently technologies such as e-mail and internet tend to push teachers toward fundamentally different ways of teaching. Depending on how they are used, these techniques shift more responsibility to the students to seek out information and interact with people at other locations. For the most part, they tend to encourage more student-centred learning. This, in turn put pressures on teachers to modify their approach to classroom teaching. The notion that students can search for and assemble information on their own is very consistent with the constructivist philosophy of teaching. However, the approach is at odds with the pedagogical practices of many Nigerian schools. In the study, "Assessment of Nigerian Teacher Education ICT Training" Jegede (2009) found that teacher educators did not understand what was needed mostly in ICT for their professional practice. Out of the specified ICT skills, Jegede (2009) maintains that teaching with ICT happened to be the least possessed by teachers.

The process of integrating technology into classroom instruction pre-supposes a technology-based teacher training programme. The production of knowledge based individuals, suitably equipped for the globalized era must take cognizance of training and re-training of teacher educators. The Nigerian government is aware of this situation and has organized several workshops and seminars in this regard but the fruits of these efforts have not been harvested probably as a result of poor acquisition of basic ICT skills on the part of learners. The implication is that students graduate without ICT skills which are needed for a successful adaptation to the knowledge-based society. When such school leavers are employed they do not possess the needed vibrancy for effective participation in the technological world of work. This situation endangers national development by retarding production rate.

Another negative effect of ICT on Nigeria is the fact that access is expensive. While the cost of internet access may be considered low by world standards, it still represents a high cost for many developing countries. Making internet connections available at the school or school cluster level will be a central problem for developing countries like Nigeria. Fullan (2001) observes that hidden costs of internet are substantial cost from the information provider to the information recipient and it is the recipient who usually pays for the telephone line, paper, printer cartridges, software upgrades and equipment repair.

Once again retraining teachers to use the new technology is complicated and costly. Jegede (2009) remarks that though teacher educators had access to internet, they lacked the technical skills, the content background and the language capacity to effectively utilize the World Wide Web including in classroom instruction. Obanya (2004) argues that teachers lack the pedagogical skills to know how to most effectively use information tool in their classroom such that its use may conflict with the prevalent instructional strategy of the teacher.

Globalization and ICT have posed negative effects for school curriculum and educational managers and planners. Existing school curriculum cannot be used to produce learners capable of meeting the global challenges. There is an urgent need for project-based school curriculum. This is a challenge for the educational sector. Globalization and ICT also pose serious challenges for education managers and administrators. The evolving nature of educational demands call for a fundamentally different crop of managers. A new educational model would have to be forged to develop professionals for success in an environment of strong market force changing people, issues and staffing leadership competencies.

Education in Nigeria would not play its developmental role if the challenges occasioned by globalization and ICT are not met. The production of school learners who would be positioned to face the global challenges would be de-celebrated in the context of obsolete curriculum structure; old fashioned pedagogy, lack of technology-based teachers, analogue educational managers and administrators and inadequate technological facilities.

Restructuring Nigeria Education to meet the challenges of Globalization and ICT for National Development.

Any fundamental change in the educational sector ought to start from educational policy development and formulation. This of course does not call for a re-formation of Nigeria's educational policies since the policies are well-formulated to the tune of societal dynamism. The pre-primary, primary, secondary, tertiary, technical, etc education policies are all rationally formulated and specified to meet the demands of each levels of learning taking cognizance of the fact that we are in a rapid growing world of science and technology. The major problems facing us however is that these beautiful policies meet stumbling block in the area of implementation. Chukwu (2010) notes that Nigerian educational system often witness set backs as a result of poor policy implementation. To this end the first step in the restructuring of education in Nigeria is effective implementation of educational policies.

Reforms in the school curriculum are another important step. Emphasis to be laid on constructivism. The idealist curriculum with its emphasis on rote learning, memorization of facts, etc cannot lead to the production of knowledge-based school learners who would meet the global challenges. Ability to fit into the world of technology would pressure school curriculum dominated by practical

works, projects, field demonstration and activity-oriented teaching and learning. Giddens (1990) contends that the relentless demand for new skills created by the use of information technology in work has reinforced the demand for effective and measurable education and training. Effective performance in the field of work demands technology-based school curriculum model. Constructivist model of curriculum is in a position to encourage learners' participations in the teaching process. That is, instead of focusing on learning objects which are transmitted from one person to another, students and teachers are engaged in a community, in which learning is the result of interactions, reflections and experience.

Adoption of technology-based curriculum suggests production of technology-based teachers that would implement the curriculum. This calls for reformation in the area of teacher education. Adaka (2010) notes that the current teacher education programme is incapable of producing teachers that would face the challenges of ICT and effective performance in the field of work. One practical way of addressing this problem is the training of teacher educators in the tune of Information and Communication Technology. This would encourage use of ICT in lecture delivery. Again, the lecture method of delivering instruction is to pave way for activity-dominated and interactive teaching model. Educational Technology as a course of study is to be made more demanding by tasking student-teachers to actively involve in creative works, arts and crafts. Group works are to be encouraged whereupon students embark on self-discovery and improvisation to prepare them to face the realities of life. This will go along way to produce teachers better placed to implement the constructivist curriculum model in a bid to produce primary, secondary and tertiary education school leavers who would effectively and efficiently work in the global era and subsequently help in nations building.

Changes in the methods of teaching are also imperative. Integration of ICT in lesson delivery needs training and professionalism. Technology in classroom instruction is practically demonstrated in the computer and internet connectively in the classroom. Such features provide an opportunity to fundamentally change the way children learn. In particularly, they allow teachers to employ a more constructivist learning environment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Nigeria as a developing nation would meet the challenge of globalization and ICT if there is a re-consideration of what goes on in the educational sector. Education is a tool for national development. Therefore, educational challenges as a matter of fact are issues of national interest. The negative effects of globalization on education have to be met for any meaning achievements to be recorded in the sector.

It is therefore, recommended that:

- 1 Government at the Federal, State and Local levels should improve on the funding of education by way of procuring technological facilities for schools at various levels.
- 2 School curriculum should be re-structured to reflect the constructivist model.
- 3 Use of ICT in lesson delivery is to be encouraged through training of teachers and teacher educators in the tune of technology-based instructional delivery.
- 4 Teacher education curriculum should be technology-based.
- 5 In-service trainings for educational managers and administrators should be organized to prepare managers of education for effective educational leadership in the era of globalization.

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